

Instructions for Submitting Nasopharyngeal Swabs to ISDH for Testing

Specimen Requirements – Must be authorized prior to sending specimens.

1. Nasopharyngeal swab in Viral Transport Media is required

Sampling Materials

1. Swab - Swab material should be synthetic, i.e., rayon, polyester, or Dacron. Calcium alginate or charcoal-impregnated swabs should not be used, nor should wood-shaft swabs
2. Viral Transport Media (VTM)-available commercially
3. Biohazard specimen bag
4. Cold packs or dry ice
5. Shipping boxes/containers with appropriate shipping labels

Submission of Specimen

1. Specimens must be submitted to the ISDH Laboratories through LimsNet, an online system that will make results available as PDF files the minute they are released at the lab. To get a free LimsNet account established at your facility for electronic submission and results reporting, call the help desk at (888) 535-0011 or send an email to LimsAppSupport@isdh.in.gov.

Transportation of Specimens

1. Wrap the labeled specimen container with absorbent material and place in a biohazard specimen bag. Be sure to package each patient's specimens individually to avoid cross-contamination.
2. Place the LimsNet packing list in the side pocket of the biohazard bag. Never place the packing list with the specimen in case the specimen leaks during transit.
3. Place the specimen(s) in a styrofoam container with sufficient cold packs to maintain 4°C during shipment. If needed, dry ice can also be used if the specimen is frozen and/or transport time may be longer than 24 hours. If dry ice is used, do not form an airtight seal on the styrofoam container because dry ice releases carbon dioxide gas. **Never store specimens at -20°C.**
4. Place the styrofoam container into the cardboard shipping box, close lid, and seal.

For questions regarding the epidemiology/surveillance or specimen authorization, please contact Shawn Richards at srichard@isdh.in.gov or 317.233.7740. For questions on lab collection or submission please contact Stephanie Dearth at stdearth@isdh.in.gov or 317.921.5843.